

VZCZCXYZ0059
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSP #0972 2291255
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 171255Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7232
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0055
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0126

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 000972

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CAR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/16/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [CARICOM](#) [TD](#)
SUBJECT: T&T NOT AFTER CARICOM SEAT ON SECURITY COUNCIL;
UNSC VOTE

Classified By: CDA, Eugene P. Sweeney for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The MFA has corrected a recent press report implying a T&T push for a regional Caricom seat on the Security Council. However, we believe a T&T bid to fill an upcoming UNSC vacancy would not be surprising. According to the Guatemalan Charge here, T&T has decided to support Guatemala over Venezuela for this year,s UNSC vacancy, credible information we have heard from no other source. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) On August 15, PolChief and PolAsst met with MFA Multilateral Affairs Division Director Susan Gordon and Senior Multilateral Affairs Officer Roanna Gopaul. Among other topics, we sought clarification of alleged statements on Security Council reform by Foreign Minister Knowlson Gift, which were reported in the August 14 edition of the Trinidad Guardian and included in post,s local press summary. Gift was responding to reporter,s questions, following a meeting with the Japanese Minister for Gender Equality and Social Affairs, in which Japan,s quest for a permanent seat on the council was raised. The article quoted Gift as saying: 8We would like to see the process broadened, the membership process broadened and to that end, any broadening of the structure should not exclude Caricom aspiring to be on the Security Council8.

¶3. (U) Gordon expressed her frustration with the inaccuracies in the article and said that Caricom member states had not historically been excluded from Security Council membership: Trinidad and Tobago was elected to the council in 1985, while Jamaica and Barbados had also served. Gordon emphasized that Gift was simply reiterating the GOTTT,s and Caricom,s general desire for Security Council reform and for the democratization of the Council which would make its membership more reflective of today,s realities in the international arena. On our way out of the meeting, we met Minister Gift himself who also expressed his dismay at the low level of reporting in the Guardian article.

¶4. (U) Asked about the current status of Caricom,s discussions regarding Guatemala,s and Venezuela,s competing candidacies for the Latin American and Caribbean seat on the Security Council to be vacated by Argentina, Gordon said that, contrary to recent reports, Caricom had not made a final decision in favor of Venezuela. She conceded that Guatemala is not a popular choice with a number of Caricom members, both because of its border dispute with Belize and because of the possibly adverse effect on certain Caricom members of Guatemala,s banana policy in the WTO. However, she said other Caricom members have reservations about Venezuela,s candidacy and have asked the Chavez government

to clarify its intentions with respect to Bird Island.

15. (C) COMMENT: We suspected that something was fishy regarding the Guardian story and this confirms that it was sloppy journalism. Gift,s statement to the press may, however, presage a GOTT run for a UNSC opening in the near future. This would certainly be in line with Prime Minister Manning,s desire to cut a larger figure on the regional stage. Regarding the UNSC vote, the Guatemalan Charge here recently told Charge privately that T&T has pledged to vote for Guatemala. Given T&T,s troubled relations with Venezuela we find that statement credible and even logical, though to our knowledge neither Minister Gift nor anyone else in the MFA has passed this information on. END COMMENT.
SWEENEY